5-29-30

Sir

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Please read this article about the genetically engineered corn that is killing the Monarch butterfly by killing the caterpillars that become the butterfly. I wonder how many other good insects it is killing and how many birds that eat these caterpillars + insects are being killed and how long will it take to affect people who eat this corn.? I want this corn taken off the market. I can see why some foreign countries refuse to buy our corn.

I think its time you stop the use of antibiotics, Harmons and steroids in cattle + chickens + pork ~~that~~ the meat that we eat. These hog building where hogs are kept confined in these big concret build from the time they are small. Then they have to have a cesspool for the waste that is washed out of the building and they always leak into a creek or water way.

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Hogs should be raised in fields where they can get fresh air + sun. This is true of Chickens + Cattle. Have you ever gone into a laying house. The chickens are kept in wire cages 24 hours a day under lights. They never see the sun or get fresh air or get to eat insects + grass which is normal and healthy. Kept in cages their food is fed by hopper the eggs roll down + are gathered from there poor birds. They are fed chemicals with their food since the conditions they are kept under they peck each others eyes out. then their beak is cut off.

They should have chicken yards and chicken houses with nest where they lay like they use to. No wonder some foreign women wont buy American meats + grain. They stopped the use of chemicals in their countries.

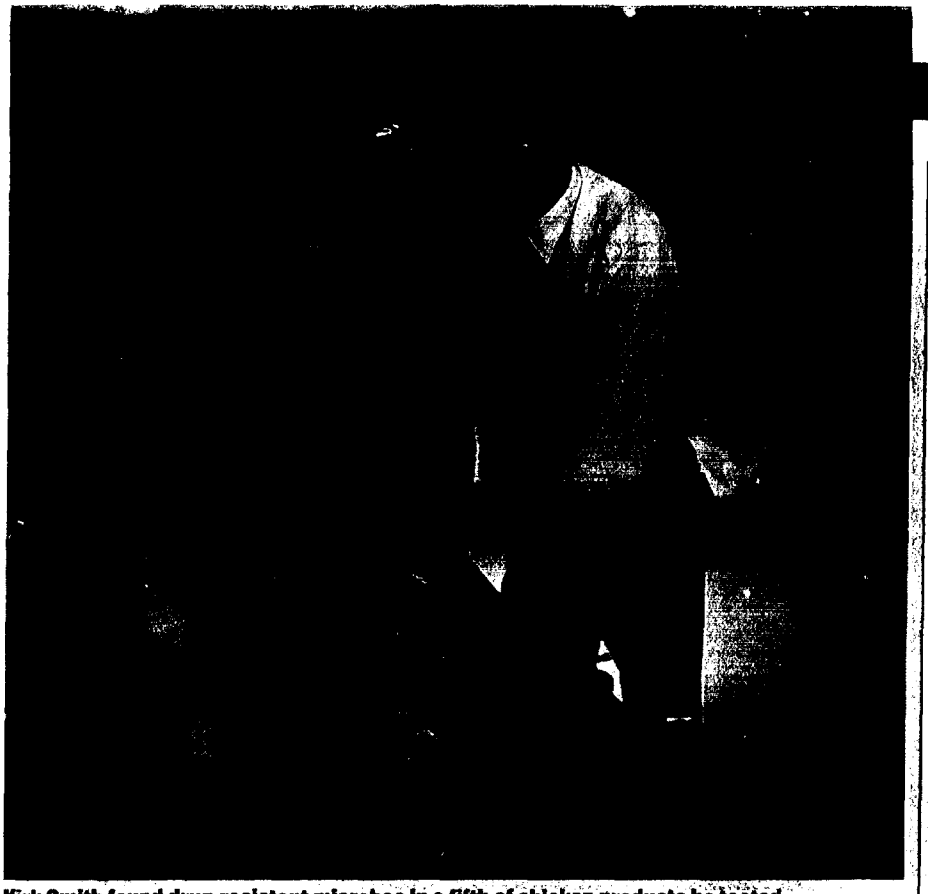
There are farmers that are going back to farming without pesticides and Chemicals it can be done. A garden without pesticides I have a beautiful healthy garden.

Maybe these Chemicals are what

killing the honey bees in this country and we don't have the frogs or liyards like we use to have. We don't have to worry about a bomb man kind is destroying the earth.

Sincerely
Jay Cruise
HC4 Box 4935
Theodosia, Mo 65761

Maybe all these Chemicals are the reason so many people in this country are dieing of cancer.



Kirk Smith found drug-resistant microbes in a fifth of chicken products he tested.

Do livestock breed drug-resistant bugs?

Antibiotics on farms may threaten humans

BY AMANDA SPAKE

PUBLIC HEALTH

Kirk Smith has chicken on his mind. Chicken, that is, that the Minnesota epidemiologist purchased in his local supermarkets.

Smith's analysis of bacteria in that poultry, published last week in the *New England Journal of Medicine*—along with unpublished data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—gives new scientific heft to earlier research linking antibiotic use in agriculture to drug-resistant pathogens in animals. Further, the findings point to an alarming corollary: Resistant strains threaten medicine's ability to treat human disease.

Most troubling are antibiotics approved for animal use that belong to the same classes of drugs needed for curing people. These include all of the fluoroquinolones, vancomycin, and a new drug, Synercid, soon to be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Farmers use the drugs to spur faster growth and treat livestock diseases. But while most bacteria exposed to the antibiotics are killed, at least a few survive. These resistant bugs multiply and can be passed to humans through raw or undercooked food, water, and manure. According to an editorial accompanying the *NEJM* report, "decades of [antibiotic] use in animals have created a huge reservoir of resistant bacteria . . . with a potential to spread to humans."

From 1992 to 1998, Smith and others at the Minnesota Department of Health studied bacterial cultures from residents infected by *Campylobacter jejuni*, a microbe that causes an estimated 2 million to 8 million cases of gastroenteritis in the United States annually. In 1992, only 1.3 percent of Minnesota's cases were caused by strains of campylobacter that were resistant to fluoroquinolones, among the most useful drugs for treating serious foodborne infections. By 1998, resistance had grown to 10.2 percent.

Smith realized that about 75 percent of the resistant cases in 1996-97 were associated with foreign travel. A little more medical sleuthing showed that about half of those travelers had been to Mexico, where fluoroquinolone use in poultry increased almost fourfold between 1993 and 1997.

Chickens fingered. But a significant number of Minnesotans who had stayed home also developed resistant infections, particularly from 1996 to 1998. Enter the chickens: Two fluoroquinolone drugs had been approved for treating E. coli in U.S. chickens in 1995 and 1996. Out of 91 chicken products Smith purchased from 16 supermarkets and analyzed for the new study, 80 were contaminated with campylobacter. Twenty percent of these bugs were resistant to ciprofloxacin, a fluoroquinolone often used for treating severe gastroenteritis. DNA fingerprinting matched resistant strains from the chickens to resistant strains in sick Minnesotans.

Vancomycin-resistant enterococci, or VRE—a bug resistant to nearly all available antibiotics—has also become a serious problem. First found in Europe, where its spread was linked to an antibiotic growth promoter, VRE arrived here in the 1990s and has proved deadly in many U.S. hospitals. Searching for a cure, the pharmaceutical company Rhône-Poulenc Rorer developed Synercid.

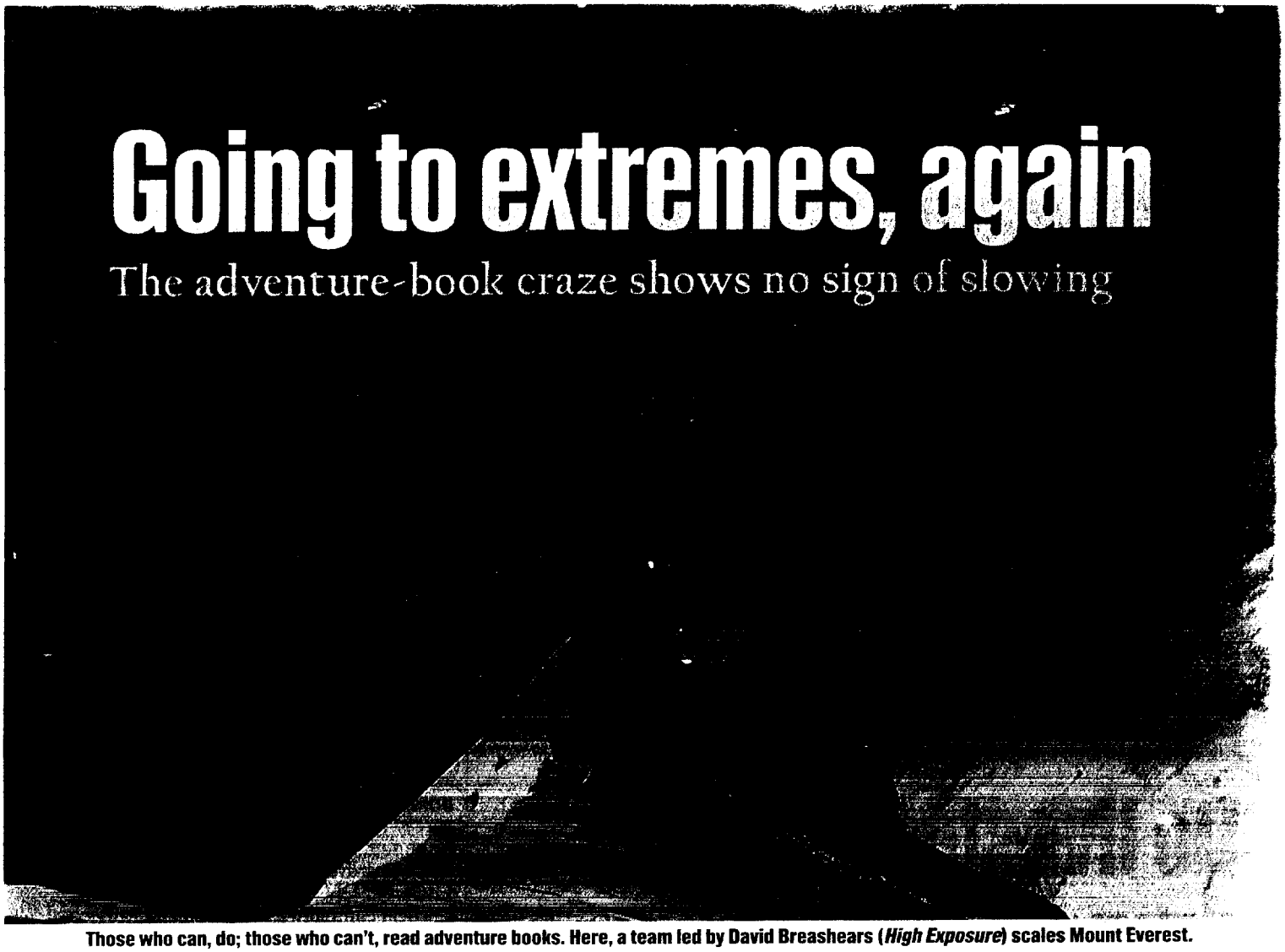
But according to CDC scientists, a related antibiotic, virginiamycin, used since 1974 in chickens has spread bugs that are resistant to Synercid even before the drug is approved. Examining bacteria from human stool samples, the researchers found that some individuals already carry Synercid-resistant bugs. And an analysis of chicken products from three states showed that Synercid-resistant enterococci contaminated more than half the products, says CDC's Fred Angulo, who will present the data this week in Washington, D.C.

By the end of summer, the FDA plans to complete an assessment of the dangers posed by fluoroquinolone-resistant campylobacter. The agency is also drafting new regulations that may radically restrict how animal antibiotics are tested and used in the future. John Keeling of the Animal Health Institute, a pharmaceutical trade group, says no action should be taken until more data demonstrate a significant risk to humans. But five consumer groups, led by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, believe we already know enough: They have petitioned the FDA to ban antibiotics used for animal-growth promotion that are needed to treat human illness. ■

LAYNE KENNEDY FOR USN&WR

Going to extremes, again

The adventure-book craze shows no sign of slowing



Those who can, do; those who can't, read adventure books. Here, a team led by David Breashears (*High Exposure*) scales Mount Everest.

BY LYNN ROSELLINI

There, looming above me, was a) the shimmering magnificence of Everest's summit; b) a world of raging, mountainous seas; c) the escalator to the food court. As I clung desperately to a) a wobbly piton in the crumbling glacial wall; b) the last shred of timber on the aft deck; c) my cell phone, I glanced back and saw a) a yawning 2,000-foot crevasse; b) the mangled body of my friend, Jack; c) a parking ticket on the windshield of my Jeep Cherokee.

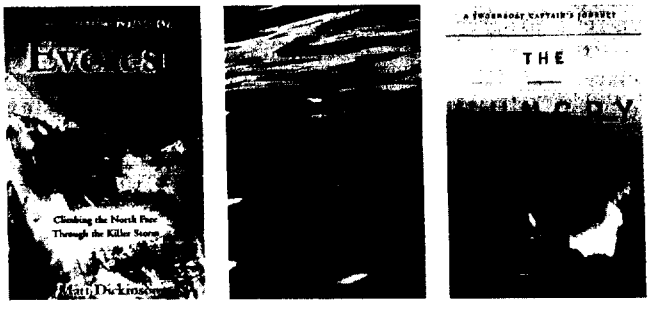
If you picked "c," you will probably not make millions writing adventure books, like authors Jon Krakauer and Sebastian Junger and a host of imitators who hope to cash in on the still-hot market for outdoor adventure narratives. Two years after the publication of the megasellers *Into Thin Air* (Krakauer's story of disaster on Mount Everest) and *The Perfect Storm* (Junger's story of disaster at sea off the Nova Scotia coast), the rush of action/adventure books shows no signs of abating.

First-time authors with harrowing man-against-nature tales are now commanding six-figure advances, and obscure historians are hauling in contracts worth up to a million or more to retell legendary epics. And while there may, at times, be something formulaic in the danger-drama-resolution format of the books, the best ones plant the reader firmly in the middle of heart-stopping predicaments and pose elemental—and eternal—questions of life and death.

PUBLISHING

The new crop of titles due out this spring and summer has a bit of everything, including several books that revisit tragedies tapped in recent bestsellers. For fans of *Into Thin Air,* a new pair of high-altitude thrillers works the same landscape. David Breashears, the leader of the IMAX documentary team on the disastrous 1996 Everest expedition, writes of dodging avalanches and hanging from thousand-foot rock faces in *High Exposure: An Enduring Passion for Everest and Unforgiving Places* (Simon & Schuster). Author Matt Dickinson recounts his climb up Everest's colder and more difficult North Face on the same day in *The Other Side of Everest* (Times Books).

Meanwhile, swordfish boat captain Linda Greenlaw, featured in Junger's bestseller, tells her own story in *The Hungry Ocean,* with gory details on how to gaff and clean the 150-pound fish. And for those who prefer their ocean adventure salted with romance, the Atlantic Monthly Press offers *Dark Wind: A Survivor's Tale of Love and Loss,* a story about what happens to two lovers who enjoy "a whirlwind, midlife



MACGILLIVRAY FREEMAN FILMS

Attack of the killer corn

Butterflies in danger from new hybrids

BY LAURA TANGLEY

In addition to a prodigious amount of grain, the U.S. Corn Belt produces roughly half the monarch butterflies that migrate between Canada and Mexico every year. The insects mate en route, leaving behind caterpillars that feed on milkweed. But a study in last week's *Nature* suggests that genetically engineered corn may kill these caterpillars—and could wreak other ecological havoc as well.

AGRICULTURE

In laboratory tests, entomologists from Cornell University found that nearly half of monarch caterpillars that ate milkweed dusted with pollen from the corn—which produces a toxin, called Bt, derived from bacteria—died after four days, compared with no deaths among insects that ate plants with normal or no pollen. Caterpillars that did survive the Bt ate less, and grew more slowly, than the control group. (Wind can carry corn pollen up to 60 yards from its parent, dropping it on other plants.)

Now grown on about 20 million acres, Bt corn saves U.S. farmers hundreds of millions of dollars a year, because the crop protects itself from pests. Until now, most experts assumed the corn posed little or no risk to nontarget organisms. But Margaret Mellon of the Union of Concerned Scientists says that the new study "undercuts the notion that [genetically altered crops] are inherently benign." ■

STEPHEN DALTON—PHOTO RESEARCHERS

A monarch butterfly, threatened by corn

CROSS FILE SHEET

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